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SUBJECT: OES MEETING WITH EU PRESIDENT AND GERMANY ABOUT
THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD)-15

¶1. Summary: On September 19th US State Department's Special Representative for Sustainable Development Jonathan Margolis, Senior Energy Advisor Griff Thompson and Embassy Econ Officer Glenn Lewis met Finnish representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, and a German representative from the Ministry of the Environment to discuss preparations for the 15th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) in May 2007. EU representatives indicated their intention to focus on "access to energy" as a prism through which to view CSD-15 themes. In the coming months, the group agreed to 1) focus on implementation and concrete outcomes, 2) attract private sector participation, 3) enhance G-77 support, and 4) identify possible follow-up activities after CSD-15. End Summary.

US Position and supporting papers

¶2. Margolis and Thompson provided Finnish and German counterparts with an overview of USG approaches towards energy issues in CSD-15, providing a summary of all negotiated text on energy over the past 16 years at UN conferences, a compendium of U.S. led practical solutions and programs in the energy sector, a "white paper" describing possible outcomes for CSD-15, and the UN's Energy Matrix (the UN document that will catalogue and highlight all voluntary actions and potential policy approaches to address energy.

Focus on access to energy/no global renewable energy targets

¶3. Finnish representative Jukka Uosukainen, Deputy Director General in the Ministry of the Environment noted that Finland had made the decision to focus on areas of agreement with the US for CSD-15. Finnish technical experts explained that they intended to use "access to energy" as the organizing principle for all four themes of CSD-15. Uosukainen also noted that in upcoming internal coordination meetings the EU member states would be asked to undertake reviews and assessments of voluntary programs that could be brought forward to CSD. He also expressed support for cataloguing these programs through the UN's Energy Matrix. Regarding negotiations, Uosukainen noted that the EU did not expect to gain agreement for a global renewables target and instead wanted to catalogue local and national level efforts on renewables. Comment: this approach differed from that reported by Minister Al-Attiah in our bilateral consultations with him and his team

(SEPTEL).

A matrix for policy options

¶4. Uosukainen noted that their assessment was that it would not be productive to seek new far reaching negotiated targets at CSD-15. In further discussions, Uosukainen elaborated that the EU was considering ways to use the Matrix to identify policy options that countries could adopt at a local and national level to achieve energy objectives, including local or national optional renewable energy targets (such as the Renewable Portfolio Standards that have been adopted by over 20 states in the US). The US responded that using the Matrix in this way to catalogue a menu of possible policy options, instead of negotiating global targets, was fully consistent with our approach. Comment: both German and Finnish representatives noted that given the sensitivities in some G-77 circles about any policy prescriptions in this area, an approach that emphasized national experiences and options instead of global negotiations was desirable at this point.

Following up on progress

¶5. Both the Finnish and German representatives expressed interest in developing a follow up mechanism to CSD-15. They were explicit in noting that the purpose of this mechanism would be to track progress on projects and programs, not to create a new UN normative body. In further discussions, our European colleagues expressed support for the US suggestion that the existing energy

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partnerships - GVEP, REEEP, REN21 (all of which the US participates in) would serve as main entities tracking progress and provide information to interested member states and stakeholders. One area of particular interest was to integrate energy into national development plans, such as Poverty Reduction Strategies, and to follow-up on such efforts four years down the road to monitor progress.

Role of the private sector

¶6. Finnish and German representatives expressed strong interest in highlighting the role of business and other stakeholders, and expressed satisfaction with the CEO panels from CSD-14. They further agreed to US suggestions that CSD-15 include opportunities for ministers, CEOs, mayors and other stakeholders to engage in direct discussion. The goal of such discussion would be to identify the roles and actions needed to spur implementation of programs and activities to address "access to energy". We agreed to jointly approach the UN Secretariat for CSD-15 to request that it provide the

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logistical arrangements for such sessions at CSD-15. We also agreed that a common message to CSD Chair Al-Attiyah encouraging him to reinforce the role of the private sector would be useful.

Further consultations

¶7. Our Finnish colleagues informed us of their intentions to host a broad consultation with JUSCANZ and G-77 countries in December in Brussels. We noted that other JUSCANZ countries might want an opportunity to consult with their EU counterparts before G-77 countries were brought

in. The Finns agreed to follow-up directly with Canada, the JUSCANZ chair to finalize modalities.

18. Comment: We were encouraged by the positive and constructive tone adopted by our EU colleagues. They seemed to want to engage in a problem solving approach with us and were careful to avoid hot button issues that have separated us in the past. That said, the Finns and Germans were careful to note that their internal policy setting process with all EU member states had yet to take place. Also, the Commission did not join what was originally billed as a US-Troika consultation. Even so, we are guardedly optimistic and hope the Finns can deliver on the approach they previewed with us.

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